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Interview with Lorelei Ransome by Don Nicoll

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee

Ransome, Lorelei

Interviewer

Nicoll, Don

Date

December 1, 2000

Place

Washington, DC

ID Number

MOH 245

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Biographical Note

Lorelei (Williams) Ransome was born in Alexandria, Virginia on June 26, 1939, one of nine children. Her father was both a civil servant and a private worker and her mother generally worked in their home. She grew up in Alexandria and attended Parker Gray School. After high school, she spent five years working in a department store while attending the ABC Business School. She then worked as a secretary in the Department of Labor for five years, until she was hired by the Senator Muskie Campaign Staff. When the 1968 campaign ended, she was hired to work on the Senate staff. After the 1972 campaign, she worked on the Intergovernmental Relations subcommittee with Al From as his personal secretary, and went with him to the Carter White House. When Carter was not reelected for a second term, she was hired by Reginald Gillian, who was a commissioner at the Interstate Commerce Commission. She worked for him for seven years until Gillian went to work for Senator Gallant, with whom she worked briefly. Then she returned to the Interstate Commerce Commission to work with Commissioner Lamboli, and then for Commissioner Gail McDonald. She worked for McDonald for thirty years until she retired.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: segregation in Alexandria, Virginia; her employment at a

department store; her time at the Department of Labor, being called “Laura Lee”; Muskie interview; her family; flying with Muskie as part of the campaign staff; other staff members; the defeated campaign; her legislation work; “dirty tricks” during the 1972 presidential campaign; Al From; Carter White House; her career after Muskie; Senator Muskie as a person and employer; and her experiences with racial discrimination in Washington, D.C.

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Transcript

Don Nicoll: It is Friday afternoon, December 1st, the year 2000. We are at 600 New Hampshire Avenue N.W. in Washington, D.C. in the Watergate complex in the offices of Hill & Knowlton and we’re interviewing Lorie Williams Ransome. Lorie, would you state your full name and spell it and give us your place and date of birth?

Lorelei Ransome: My full name is Lorelei, L-O-R-E-L-E-I, Williams Ransome, R-A-N-S-O-M-E. Place of birth, Alexandria, Virginia. Date of birth, June 26th, 1939.

DN: And the interviewer is Don Nicoll. Lorie, were you part of a large family or a small family growing up?

LR: Very large family, there were nine of us, two boys and seven girls.

DN: And where did you come in the line up?

LR: Next to the last.

DN: You were the next to the youngest?

LR: Yes.

DN: Not the baby, but close.

LR: Not the baby but close enough. Eleven months difference.

DN: Oh. And what was your father's occupation?

LR: Daddy was, I guess, he worked several jobs at Fort Belvoir, Virginia and he also worked in a hardware store, very good friends of the family gave him a job. He had so many children they had to, he really had to work to take care of us.

DN: So he was both a civil servant and private worker.

LR: Yes, yes.

DN: And did your mother have any time to work outside the home?

LR: She did for a little while, but mostly she was at home.

DN: What kind of a family was it?

LR: It was a wonderful family. The neighborhood kids would come to our house to play because there were so many of us. And we didn't have to go outside to find friends because they came to us.

DN: And you grew up in Alexandria?

LR: In Alexandria, yes, up until early twenties and then we moved to Washington, D.C.

DN: Now when you were growing up in Alexandria you were going to segregated schools.

LR: Yes, absolutely. It was, I guess we didn't pay too much attention to it because it's what we were used to, going to an all black school, couldn't do a lot of things that other people could do, those things really stick with me. Couldn't go into a store to try on clothes. You had to buy them first and then take them home, try them on, and if they didn't fit you took them back to the store. You couldn't sit down at the counter in Woolworth to have a soda. You couldn't do that. And my mother was very protective of us. I didn't get to go to Washington, D.C. until, I guess I was in my twenties, because she didn't want anything to happen to us. And when we did go to, I did go to Washington, D.C., it was with a boyfriend, to the movies, and we had to sit in the balcony. We couldn't sit anywhere else but in the balcony.

DN: And that continued until the sixties.

LR: Yes, yes. It was quite a strange thing to . . . I remember vividly when I went to work on the Hill, I know I'm getting ahead of the program, but just meeting Don Nicoll and, Mr. Nicoll. And he says, "Don't call me Mr. Nicoll, call me Don." And it took a while for me to get accustomed to calling him Don because that was not what I grew up with. When I worked in the federal government it was Mr. So-and-so, Mr. This, Mrs. This. You couldn't, they called you by your first name but you couldn't call them by their first name, so that was something I was not accustomed to when I went to the Hill.

DN: In your experience working for the government and the Civil Service before you went to the Hill, were other young women who were white and in same jobs also called by their first name, or was this strictly a racial (*unintelligible word*)?

LR: It was strictly a racial thing. That was something that you couldn't, you couldn't do anything about. I know that when I first went on, my first government job, the head man called me in and said, "I want to meet this person who's named Lorelei. I have a cousin who lives in Germany and her name is Lorelei." And he says, "I finally get to meet you, I think I will call you Laura Lee." And I just had to look at him and wonder, "Where are you coming from?" So I never said anything and whenever he called me Laura Lee I did not hear him. It was always brought to my attention, 'Mr. Darling is calling you'. And I would say, "Oh, he is?" But I never answered to the name of Laura Lee, because he knew what my name was. And because he had a cousin named Lorelei he did not want to call me that, and I knew that.

DN: Was he from the south?

LR: I don't remember where he was from.

DN: Well we've jumped ahead a bit, let's go back to your schooling. You went to the Arlington public schools and -

LR: The Alexandria.

DN: Alexandria, excuse me.

LR: The only black high school they had, Parker Gray High School.

DN: What was your major in high school?

LR: I really didn't have a major. They wanted me to really move forward and to go on to college, and I didn't see myself doing that. And I guess, I'm a very sensitive person. And I looked at my mother and my father struggling and even though I was next to the baby, I wanted to get out and work and do something to help my parents, to ease the burden for them. And I felt that the best way I could do it was not to go to college but to get myself a good job and get out and work and help them.

DN: And what were you trained to do when you left high school?

LR: When I left high school I went to work in a department store and I worked there for five years. And I moved up from working in the stockroom to working in the office, doing the books, cashiering, relieving the cashiers and closing up the store. And when I found that the manager was moving on to another store, then I talked with her and I said, "I need to get a skill so that I can get another job." So she said, "Fine," and she agreed that I could go to school during that time. So I went to ABC Business School and learned shorthand and typing, and from that I got a job in the federal government.

DN: Now, when you went to school did the business pay for your schooling?

LR: No.

DN: But they let you take the time.

LR: Yes, yes, it was a very wonderful person, she was really, really very sweet. She took me and my sister Marquette, gave us a job and put us in as cashiers when no other store had black cashiers. And I thought that was a wonderful thing, and I had quite an experience in that the credit manager was white and come to find out she was stealing money. And when we found out I was so frightened that the store manager would think it was me or my sister, and she knew right away that it couldn't have been either one of us, and she knew exactly who it was. So that was quite an experience.

DN: Did you encounter any resentment when you became cashiers?

LR: No, no, none. The sales people were very sweet, very nice people.

DN: Now what was your first job in the federal government?

LR: Secretary, I was a secretary to just one person actually, and -

DN: And which department was this?

LR: It was in the Department of Labor, and I can't remember back that far to -

DN: All right. The, one thing I d-, you mentioned earlier the supervisor who insisted on calling you Laura Lee, how did you come to get the name Lorelei, how did your family pick that?

LR: Oh, the name Lorelei, my mom had so many children she wanted to be different with each girl, because there's Audrey and there's Gloria, they are the most common, I think. And she wanted to be different with me so she heard the story, Lorelei Kilbourne, on the radio, so she decided she was going to call me Lorelei, and that's how I got the name Lorelei.

DN: Until some of us called you Lori.

LR: Well yeah, when I got to the Hill they did.

DN: Informality took over.

LR: Yes, yes but that was fine because I've always wanted, actually the love of my life I wanted him to call me Lori, and he did, Don Nicoll.

DN: Oh.

LR: My husband calls me Lorelei.

DN: Now you worked at the Department of Labor. How long were you there?

LR: I was there for approximately five years, because I moved from a GS-4 to a GS-6, moving around. When I became a GS-6 working on L Street, that's when I got the word, telephone call, that Senator Muskie was looking for a secretary, because I had friends who worked in the Department of Commerce in the Personnel Department. And they found out about it and the guy had his wife, whom I worked with too, contact me and ask me to go up for the interview.

DN: Now why did they think you were a good one to go?

LR: I don't, well we were very good friends and I guess her husband just felt like Lorelei would be fine, I mean she would be the person to go. So I went up for the interview, I talked to my boss, the guy that I was working for at the time and he said, "Oh, that's wonderful, that's great," he says, "you've got to do it." And I was like, "Oh, okay, but I don't know whether I want to do this or not." And he said, "Go," so I did.

DN: Now when was this?

LR: This was back in '68, towards the end of the summer I think it was because it was the beginning of the campaign.

DN: Before the convention.

LR: Before the convention, yeah. No, was it before the convention? Because I didn't go to the convention.

DN: No, I know you didn't go to the convention but it seems to me you were, you were on the staff just before the convention.

LR: Yes, because I went up for the interview, and my boss asked me when I came back, "How did it go?" And I said, "It went fine." And then he says, "What do you think?" I said, "I don't know." And then the next day I got a telephone call saying, "We want you to pack your clothes and come." And I said, "Wait a minute, wait a minute, slow down." I, you know, "I need to know what I'm doing. I need to know what's going on. I need to know what it's all about. I've

got to work in the office for a while, let me work in the office.” So, that’s what Don allowed me to do.

DN: What did you, you’ve indicated that you, you thought the interview went well and that it looked like an okay job to have, what were, what was your knowledge of the Hill and of Senator Muskie at that point?

LR: At that point I knew that Senator Muskie was running for vice president, and I thought to myself, this is just another interview, there’s no way that they’re going to pick you, and you just put forth an effort and see what happens. And that’s what I did, I was very relaxed, very calm, because I just said this is a long shot and there’s no way that I would be picked, I know they’re interviewing other people. And so I just left it at that.

DN: And other than the fact that Senator Muskie was running for vice president, did you have any, any sense of who he was or what he’d done?

LR: No, I really had no idea, I had no sense of who he was, where he was from. I, we were really not into politics and I never really gave it a thought. As far as working on the Hill, I knew about the Hill, what they did, but I didn’t, I didn’t think in terms of myself working on the Hill.

DN: Now you say you weren’t into politics, did your family have any interest in politics at all?

LR: No, they didn’t. I guess they were just too busy raising their family and they just were not really into it.

DN: Did they talk at all about the presidents, Roosevelt, well you would not have remembered Roosevelt, but Truman and Eisenhower?

LR: They talked very little, especially my mom didn’t do any talking like that about politics at all. My father maybe a little talking about politics. I think basically they were more into the family structure, trying to raise the family, spend more time with the family since Daddy was working two jobs and trying to do the best he could with us, getting us out to various places and coming home and having fun with us, playing with us, getting to know his kids, that sort of thing because he was away so much.

DN: Had he grown up in Alexandria?

LR: Yes, yes.

DN: And your mother, too?

LR: My mother, too, uh-huh, yeah.

DN: And how far back did the family go in Alexandria, do you know?

LR: I know that my father is part, was part Indian, his father was Indian, and I don’t remember

what his mother was. But they grew up in Alexandria, and his father was on the water, he was a fisherman. I remember he came from a very large family because his father married twice. He lost his first wife and he married again, and I think he had something like twenty children, the combination of the two marriages. And he had mostly, mostly brothers, had a couple sisters.

DN: Did you get to know any of your grandparents or aunts and uncles?

LR: Unfortunately I did not get to know any of my grandparents. I knew five of my aunts and uncles on my father's side. My mom was an only child and her parents died in their early twenties and her grandmother raised her. Her parents died when she was about eight. I guess her father died when she was about six. So she didn't have anyone but her grandmother, and I guess that's why she had so many children. The love that she was lacking in having a mother and father she made up for in her children.

DN: So you came from a family that was apolitical, and you found yourself suddenly plunged into a national campaign. What was that like?

LR: It was wonderful because I would come home and talk to them, in what time that I did have with them. And they would meet me every time we landed at Washington National and take me home and take me back to the airport. We would discuss things that I'd seen, things that I had done, and it was very exciting for them. They were so proud of me because none of my siblings took a step in that direction, I was the only one. And when I look back over my life I think how remarkable, and that it was so wonderful and I'm so thankful for it all.

DN: Did you have much contact with Senator Muskie during that campaign?

LR: Yes, because we were on the plane and, you know, we could see him walking up and down the aisle and he had Christmas parties and invite you to his home, and it was, yeah, we had contact with him.

DN: Can you describe what it was like working on the plane?

LR: That was quite an experience. My first time on the plane, and I'm sitting there and they say, "Buckle in," and I buckle my seat and I'm sitting there, the plane takes off and we level off, and then all of a sudden everybody starts unbuckling and people start scurrying around. And I'm looking, thinking to myself, 'What's going on? Is the plane getting ready to crash or what?' They start busying themselves, and then all of a sudden there was a typewriter plopped down in front of me and I thought, 'What am I supposed to do with this up in the air?' And I'm looking around at everybody and they're looking at me and they stick this paper in my face and, "Here, type this up." And I go, "Okay." I was never accustomed to having people looking over my shoulder while I'm typing, and I never liked that idea. And I thought to myself, 'How am I going to do this?' And then I said, "Okay Lorelei, you can do it, you can do it."

So I sat there and I started typing. And it was so funny because we had those old typewriters with the carriages where you had to hit the bar, the carriage would swing out. And I had one of those aisle seats and the reporters were in the aisle and they were talking and catching different

people and interviewing them. And I was sitting there typing away and I hit the carriage one time and this man was standing there with his back to me and I went, "bam," into him and he turned and looked at me and I said, "Oh, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry." And I was like, "Oh my God, what am I doing?" But it was just so exciting and I got caught up in it, it was just great. And I thought, okay. So once the typing was done on the stencil that we had to use, then you had to run it off on paper. And I said, "Okay, how do we do this?" And I was taught everything on the plane by Kathy Keup, she was a wonderful teacher. And it was just such a wonderful experience. I had never seen anything like that in my life, but it was so enjoyable.

DN: Did you get a chance during that campaign to go to many rallies, or were you busy on the plane and in the hotels?

LR: Busy on the plane, in the hotels, did get to go to some of the rallies, but mostly we were in the hotels working, collating the speeches, getting them together, and it was just quite an experience, it was so wonderful. I mean, I, I'm still in awe of the whole thing when I think back on it.

DN: Do you remember some of the people who worked on that plane?

LR: I know the Secret Serviceman, Howard Druckman, the Indian guy, I can't remember his name, I can see him so vividly, the stewardess that we had the whole time, I can't remember their names. I don't know why I remember Howard Druckman so well.

DN: Howard came back after the campaign, he's practiced law in New York, but he came back to the office fairly frequently.

LR: Oh, okay, because his name just sticks in my head. But I can't remember all the names.

DN: Peter Kyros, Jr.?

LR: Peter Kyros, Jr.

DN: Paul Brountas?

LR: Paul Brountas, yes, yes, Paul was a dear heart. I can see all these faces but I can't remember the names.

DN: When the campaign was over and Vice President Humphrey and Senator Muskie had lost, it was back to the Senate for a while.

LR: Yes.

DN: How was that experience, having to get over the campaign?

LR: Okay, getting over the campaign, it was, it was tough getting over the loss. But then I had to start thinking, because when I took the job, to work on the Hill with Senator Muskie, when I

left my old job my boss told me that he was holding the position open for me, he wanted me to come back. And I thanked him very much for doing that because he said, "This is an opportunity that you cannot pass up. I won't let you pass it up, that, I'm going to treat you like my daughter. You're going to go do this, and you're going to come back to me." And I thanked him and I said, "Okay." I did that, and I worked, I guess I'd been there for about a week after the campaign and I finally said to Don Nicoll, that my old boss is calling me and he wants me to come back. He's holding my job open for me. And Don Nicoll looked at me and said, "Holding your job? You're not going anywhere, you're staying up here." And I looked at Don and said, "What?" He s-, "You're staying here, you're not going anywhere." I went, "Oh." I thought this was a job that was just specifically for the campaign and that's how I viewed it. And then when you said, "No, you're not going anywhere, you're staying here."

DN: And how did that new career work out for you?

LR: It was wonderful because I got to learn a lot of things. It was all new. It was different from working in the federal government. I got to see some of the senators, the congressmen, it was like everyday people, they just walked around just like everybody else. Because on the outside you're sort of in awe of these people, that they're making the laws, they're here, and you just look at them as a, you just look at them differently. But once I was there it's like, you're just like everybody else.

DN: Did you find yourself working on legislation that was of particular interest to you?

LR: I did a variety of things, a lot of other, a lot of things. I was working with Jane Fenderson [Cabot], I wrote some letters, working with Don Nicoll dictating letters to me. I just enjoyed doing that sort of thing. It was just what I wanted to do.

DN: And that continued from, in 1969 the effort toward the presidency in '72 got under way and the office changed again. What was that experience like for you?

LR: That was quite an experience, too, because if I was going to work in the campaign again, then that meant that we had to leave the Hill, we had to find an office away from the Hill. And that was done and I went with Don Nicoll to, to the office away from the Hill. And I had always heard about, and I think I heard you say something about dirty politics. And I, for the life of me I couldn't remember, recall why would he say dirty politics, why is politics so dirty, I don't understand, it doesn't look dirty to me. I just couldn't understand that until we moved away from the Hill and got the office downtown.

DN: And then what, what struck you that made you realize there was such a thing as dirty politics?

LR: Well, there were a couple of things and I don't remember which happened first. One was one day when I came in, I knew that everything had to be hush-hush. You didn't go out and talk about what you were doing, I knew that. And one day I came into the office, one morning when I walked in, and my desk was near the stairwell, and I noticed that the door was ajar and I thought, "Why is that door sitting ajar like that?" So I went over and looked and I just took my

finger and pushed it open and saw that there was Scotch tape on the latch. And I informed you to, come look at this door, and when you did you said, "Okay." And then we discovered that a typewriter was missing, stationary was missing. And then shortly after that there were letters typed up saying that there was free beer at this rally, and they almost had a riot because there was no beer at the rally. And then I thought, "Okay, this is what they mean by dirty politics." Oh, okay, and I thought, I mean to me it was very frightening. I mean, to think that people would go to that length to do things like that, to break into an office.

DN: And you continued in the campaign.

LR: Yes, I did, I did. And another thing that came up was you dictating a letter to me and said, "This is confidential, don't let anybody come around your desk while you're typing it." I said, "I won't," and I typed up that letter. You said, "File it when you get through with it." And I said, "I will." Filed it, locked it up, gave it to you, you signed it, sealed it in an envelope, gave it to the messenger to take to the Hill. And the next morning when I came into the office you looked at me and said, "The letter that I dictated to you yesterday?" And I said, "Yes." He says, "It's in the papers this morning." "Don, I ne-, it did not get out of my sight, I didn't." He said, "I know, I know, I know." And I thought, 'how in the world did it, what happened?' And I was like, "I can't believe this. How could anyone get that letter?" And then we found out that it was the cab driver who was delivering the mail to the Hill. He was opening up the thick ones and giving them to the people. I mean, that was, that made me all that much more cautious of what was around me, and who was around me.

DN: What, in addition to those kinds of events, what struck you about the 1972 campaign?

LR: It was different because he was running for the presidency. And this was altogether different, this was more, to me more intense, that this is something that, this is a big, a big office, and that we've got to really work hard to get this done. We got to go all out, do our best.

DN: And during that time did you see much of Senator Muskie?

LR: On occasion, on occasion. It was, I mean because he was running for the top job this time, it's, he was more out there, he had more things to do, more events.

DN: At the end of that campaign in July of '72 when Senator McGovern got the nomination, then you went back to the Hill, your immediate boss left the office, and what happened then?

LR: When I went back to the Hill I had a choice, they told me I had a choice of staying with the senator's staff or going to one of his subcommittees. And since my boss, Don Nicoll, had left, I did not want to work in, I didn't want to work on his staff and so I decided to go to his subcommittee.

DN: Which one did you go to?

LR: It was the -

DN: Intergovernmental Relations?

LR: Intergovernmental Relations, exactly, with Al From, I went there.

DN: Did you find the experience of working on committee staff much different from the personal office?

LR: Yes, yes I did. Even though Al had a secretary, a personal secretary, I still did a lot of work for him, typing up legislation and just doing research work. And I found it to be a little more, a little closer to the legislation process and I found it to be very interesting and I really enjoyed that.

DN: Did you develop some expertise in certain kinds of legislation, or was it general?

LR: It was general, just general because I worked not only with Al but with Jim Davidson, David, I can't -

DN: David Johnson perhaps?

LR: David Johnson, yes, David Johnson and I worked pretty close together.

DN: And you were there how long?

LR: I guess I was there for, I guess three, four years, and then Al went down to the White House and he asked me to come with him and I decided, okay, why not? And I went with Al to the White House.

DN: So you worked in the Carter White House.

LR: Yes.

DN: On -?

LR: (*Unintelligible word*).

DN: Working on inflation.

LR: Yes. That was quite an experience.

DN: How did that differ from working on the Hill, both the senator's office and the subcommittee?

LR: It was different to me because I took everything personal, that I had a responsibility that nothing should come out of my mouth outside of the office, or whatever I heard, or whatever I was working on, it had to stay with me, that, it was very exciting. I mean, there were things that had to be delivered to the White House which, it was so exciting to me that I'm going over to the

White House. Because we actually worked in the old executive office building where the vice president is housed, he has his office, but I got the opportunity to go over to the White House quite frequently because I was given a pass to do that. Not everyone got a pass to go into the White House.

DN: And were your duties different at that point, or were they similar to what you -?

LR: They were similar, they were similar because Al needed someone to work with him. And also David was there, too, so we had to, I mean we pretty much worked closely together doing his letters and what have you, answering the phones, setting up appointments.

DN: At the end of the Carter administration, where did you go?

LR: At the end of the administration I realized that he was not going to get in for the second term, and I got a phone call from someone I had met on the Hill, while I was on the Hill, Reginald Gilliam. He was a commissioner at the Interstate Commerce Commission, and he called me and asked me to come to work for him. I had met him on the Hill at a hearing, one of Senator Muskie's hearings, and we sat there together and he was kind of chatting with me and said, "If I ever got in a position to have a secretary would you come to work for me?" And I said, "Why not, sure," jokingly, and just kind of put it out of my mind. But then I got that phone call from him and I knew what was happening, and people were leaving in droves, so I told them I had an interview to go on and they said, "Okay, fine." And I went for the interview and he said, "Yes, I want to hire you to come work for me." And that's when I left.

DN: So you went back to the Civil Service, but in the Regulatory Commission.

LR: Yes.

DN: And how long were you there?

LR: I was there for a good seven years because I worked for three commissioners during that term, in the same office. Reg left, and then I left with Reg when he went to, back to work on the Hill with Senator Glenn when he was running, so I worked there briefly. And then when that folded, Reg went to George Washington University to work and he took me with him. So it was only for a year, and then after that I went back to the Interstate Commerce Commission working for Commissioner Lamboli. And then Commissioner Lamboli left and then I went to work for McDonald, Gail McDonald, another commissioner. And I had my thirty years in with Gail being there and I retired.

DN: That was your first retirement.

LR: That was my first retirement.

DN: When you look back over the time you spent in Senator Muskie's office, what it is about him and his work as a senator that impressed you the most?

LR: What impressed me the most about the work and the things that he did, he was such a statuesque man. He was, he was honest, he did all of the good things that he wanted to do, the environment, he was just a down-to-earth person that you could talk to. He was, just the things that he accomplished while in the Senate.

DN: As you worked for him, and in the other offices connected with him on the Hill, did you encounter any of the residual kinds of discrimination that you'd experienced as a young woman, both in your high school years and then working for the government? Were there areas in the Senate that still raised those barriers or treated you differently?

LR: No. As a matter of fact, one incident that I had, I was with one of my co-workers in Senator Muskie's office and we were walking down the hall. And Senator Muskie came out of the office and he said, "Hi, Lori." I said, "Hi Senator Muskie." And the young lady had been working for Senator Muskie, I know a good two or three years before I got there, and she was so hurt that he remembered my name and didn't speak to her. And I thought, "Oh wow," you know. And I looked at her and I said, "Sweetheart, why are you getting upset?" "He remembered your name and he didn't remember mine." And I said, "Well how many black people are working in his office?" And she started laughing and said, "Okay, okay." "Why wouldn't he remember my name?" I mean, that was something that I don't know whether it was because I was black or because he recognized me and he remembered me, because he would always say, "Hi Lori." When he would come down to the campaign office on L Street, he would walk in and they would try to introduce me to him. He says, "You don't have to introduce me to Lori." And that's just the way he was, he just remembered. But it was just so funny.

And no, I didn't, the only other time that I felt any kind of, and it wasn't really discrimination, it was just the man and his attitude, Barry Goldwater. I used to run into him in the hallway all the time. And it was so funny because whenever I would see a senator or congressman I would speak to them. And for some reason Barry Goldwater, when he would see me coming, the very first time, he hugged the wall, he turned his face to the wall. And I looked at this man and thought, "Why? What do I look like?" And I would say, "Good morning, Senator Goldwater," and he wouldn't say a word and just walk past me with his face to the wall. And I thought that was so funny, that you would be so strong with that. And consequently, whenever I saw him, it was, "Good morning, Senator Goldwater," and I always got the same response, never a hi. But the Hill, to me, was fine working there, no discrimination.

DN: Is there anything else you'd like to add to your experience working for Senator Muskie?

LR: I think it was a wonderful, marvelous experience, he was a wonderful man. I really admired him, I got to know him, him and his wife and family, and it was just beautiful. And I wouldn't exchange it for anything in the world. I think it was a wonderful experience for someone of my background.

DN: Thank you Lori.

LR: You're welcome.

End of Interview